

S P E E C H

J.

OF

MR. ANDREW EWING,

OF TENNESSEE,

ON THE

ADMISSION OF CALIFORNIA.

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DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 18, 1850.

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A D M I S S I O N O F C A L I F O R N I A .

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The House being in Committee of the Whole (Mr. RICHARDSON, of Illinois, in the chair) on the President's California Message, Mr. EWING said :

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have watched the progress of this debate with an anxiety proportioned to the magnitude of the interests involved ; feeling, from the commencement, that the harmony and permanent prosperity of the Republic depended mainly upon the immediate and peaceful adjustment of our sectional disputes. This interest has risen superior in my mind to every partisan aim and object.

For the first two months of our session, it seemed as if we were upon a sea of troubles, without a star or compass to guide our course. Beginning our session with a series of warmly-contested and somewhat sectional elections, crimination was followed by re-crimination, and threats by menaces, until the Spirit of Discord evoked during the storm, seemed likely to reign forever in our councils. Happily for ourselves, for our country and the world, this chaos of strife and confusion has measurably cleared away, and we are enabled at last to see the shore, even if our vessel shall never regain its offing. More kindly influences have arisen, and those offers of conciliation and compromise which were proudly spurned in the outset, are now patiently heard and dispassionately considered. We have some practical propositions at length offered, which are now before the committee. It will be impossible, within the compass of a single hour, to discuss all the questions in regard to slavery ; nor would I deem it proper, even under different regulations, to mingle all these subjects together, and thus greatly retard, if not absolutely prevent, any favorable adjustment of the particular issues before us. We have under consideration bills for the admission of California as a State, the erection of territorial governments in the districts of Utah and New Mexico, and the final location of the boundaries of Texas.

These three subjects naturally connect themselves together; for in arranging the limits of California you define to some extent the boundary of the other Territory, and in the creation of territorial governments for Utah and New Mexico, you necessarily prescribe the true extent of country under the government of Texas. This connection of destiny and interest, as arising from geographical relation, is not more determinate than the moral and political reasons which should induce us to connect their fate in one general bill.

The vast extent of Texas, the indebtedness of its State government, the restlessness of the people of New Mexico under her dominion, the extensive and thinly-peopled wastes of Utah and New Mexico not yet ready for independent sovereignties, but deeply in need of territorial governments and Federal protection, and the rising wealth, glory and population of California demanding immediately a State government, all seem as if they were elements placed in our hands by Providence, ready to be aptly joined together in one harmonious whole, for their own proper advancement and the tranquility of the Republic.

With a view to the final adjustment of these questions, two plans have been presented to the House. The first one, familiarly known as that of the President, contemplates the immediate admission of California, with no further action as to the Territories until they are ready to claim admission as States of the Union. The second plan proposes the immediate admission of California, the creation of territorial governments in Utah and New Mexico, without restriction as to slavery, and the acknowledgment of the boundaries of Texas, with a monied compensation for her cession of a reasonable portion of her territory to the United States.

There are, in my opinion, insuperable objections to the first of these two systems; foremost among which is the great fact, that it does not accomplish one main object of its existence, which is, the *satisfactory, peaceful, and harmonious* adjustment of the subject-matter. No plan which does not measurably satisfy the expectation of the masses of the people, in all sections of the Union, can ever be regarded as national and statesman-like in its character. As evidence of the fact that this system is not regarded as satisfactory to the mass, especially of the Southern people, it is only necessary to recur to the astounding and conclusive fact, that although there are a large number of Southern Whig Representatives in this House and the Senate, yet not one has ventured a full concurrence with the President on this subject; and very many of the ablest and most patriotic of them, whilst admitting, as I do, the honesty and patriotism of General Taylor, have openly repudiated his views of policy.

The Southern people, too, throughout the length and breadth of our land, have read and understood the merits of the proposed

plan; but no glad response has yet been heard from any portion of our country—no loud acclaim has followed the proclamation, rolling up from our hills and valleys the hearty approval of our citizens; but everywhere it has been received either with open condemnation, or that cold, chilling silence, which equally indicates the sorrow and disapproval of the auditory.

It is true, Mr. Chairman, that the feeling of the South is not alone to be consulted in the settlement of this matter; but her sanction is a necessary element in any compromise that insures the safety of our institutions; and therefore, however just or comprehensive any arrangement might otherwise be deemed, if it does not give *her* reasonable satisfaction, it has utterly failed of one half of its object.

The refusal of any civil government to the people resident in the Territories of Utah and New Mexico, until they are ready to form State governments, is another conclusive objection to the policy of the President. We have on our table petitions from the citizens of these Territories, representing, in glowing language, their sufferings from the want of a governor, courts of justice, an organized militia, and the other attendant benefits arising from a well-regulated system of government. They are scattered over a widely-extended face of country, surrounded by hostile tribes of Indians, presided over by a military governor, and wholly unable to combine for their own protection, or the better regulation of their domestic concerns. If they are thus left to struggle on in a hopeless contest with the difficulties of their situation, it will not only be cruel to them, but an open violation of our treaty stipulations with Mexico for their defence and protection as citizens of the Union.

It is true, as stated by the gentleman from New York, (Mr. DUER,) that we might pass a bill during the present session of Congress authorizing the formation of State governments for these new Territories, and their admission into the Union so soon as they should have completed the preparatory requisites for such an incorporation. But, sir, this proceeding would require at least two years for its final completion, during all which time they would be helpless and unprotected; and who can say that even then they would have the requisite population for an admission, or that their local or pecuniary situation would enable them to assemble at any convenient place for legislation, or bear the heavy expenses incident to all State governments?

It is passing strange, that those who are daily urging the immediate and unconditional admission of California, on account of the justice of her claim and the unprotected situation of her citizens, seem never to have reflected, that just in proportion to the greater poverty and weakness of the other Territories, they are perpetrating a more serious injustice towards them, by refusing them all civil administration until they have strength and power

to protect themselves. In all the other relations of life it has been generally understood that in proportion to the weakness of the persons under your guardianship, the greater was the necessity for covering them with the shield of protection. But here the rule is sought to be reversed. California is surrounded on her interior side by the inhospitable mountains of the Sierra Nevada, which cover her from the depredations of hostile Indians, whilst her Pacific coast is literally crowded with the hundred thousand hardy emigrants, who are in search of the golden treasures which roll down her beautiful rivers. Utah and New Mexico, on the other side of the mountains are open to all incursions, poor and thinly peopled—and yet they are to *be neglected and California protected!*

The refusal of territorial governments to Utah and New Mexico is subject to another serious difficulty, inasmuch as it will leave the boundary of Texas undefined, and thus leave the people on the eastern bank of the Rio Grande in the cruel position of not knowing whether they are under the dominion of Texas or that of the Union. Furthermore, this irritating cause of difference between Texas and the United States in regard to their boundary line will be continued, until no pecuniary consideration can purchase from Texas her claim to the territory, and then we shall have the dangerous and delicate duty of disintegrating a sovereign State of the Confederacy, or leaving her such an extent of territory, and amount of population, as would give her a preponderating and dangerous weight in our national councils.

The last and most deleterious effect of this system of delay or non-action in regard to the Territories, will be the continuance of the agitation as to slavery, which, for the last few years, has, more or less, convulsed every portion of the country. We need repose and quiet—the calm, peaceful rest which will tranquilize the fevered members of the Confederacy, and reunite the broken ligaments of our Union. I am no alarmist, nor would I willingly entertain the belief that our Union can be dissolved; but it must be evident to all that many of the bands which united us are already broken, and others greatly loosened. It may be true, as has been stated in this House, that no single person could loosen even one of the massive columns which support this Hall, much less those which uphold our nation; yet if we are to believe the report of our Secretary of the Interior, heat and cold, frost and moisture, are fast sapping the foundation of this whole superstructure; and unless this decay is arrested, will, in a few years, leave our splendid Capitol but one heap of ruins; may God avert the omen as to our Union.

The only safeguard for our Confederacy is the speedy and entire removal of all the irritating causes of agitation and discussion between the North and the South. If we would ensure our preservation, we must never endanger it by neglect, and then trust

to the strong arm of power for the maintenance of our institutions. My examination of the history of the world has long since satisfied my mind, that all forced unions are but continued scenes of dire oppression on the one side, with bitter hate and bloody revenge on the other. We have now in the history of modern Europe two memorable examples of the truth of this assertion, and they are but the exemplification of a truth coexistent with time itself. Unfortunate Poland, and still more unhappy Ireland have long presented to our sorrowful vision

“The bloodiest picture in the book of time.”

United by the links of force with their more powerful neighbors, they have struggled on for years, amid famine, war, and pestilence, a curse to themselves and an eye-sore to their oppressors. We should profit by their example, and always remember, that national ties, as well as those connecting individuals, must be the result of love and interest, or they will prove sources of sorrow and disquiet to all within their influence.

It is matter of astonishment to me that the Whigs and Democrats of the North, the members of the true national parties, do not perceive the danger of leaving these territorial questions open for another canvass before the people. It is as clear as the noon-day sun, that unless this agitation shall be quieted in some reasonable time, they will both be engulfed in the abyss of Abolitionism. That party is aggressive in its character, new in its organization, and resting its basis apparently on religion and morality. The party questions which formerly separated the two *national parties*, have nearly spent their force, and while in this demoralized condition, the new army of Free-soilism is thundering on the flank of either division. The destiny of the old parties is certain, unless they overturn the base of Abolitionism by an extinction of the materials from which it is formed. Mournful indeed will be the prospect for the Republic when these old parties are thus overthrown, and we have upreared in our midst two gigantic sectional armies, struggling for geographical influence and power, without regard to the duties and obligations arising from the Constitution.

We are often asked by our Northern brethren why it is that we are so excited at our probable exclusion by law from those remote Territories, where slavery is equally excluded by soil and climate. They deem it passing strange that our people should be so discontented, or our statesmen so excited, as even to peril the harmony of our Confederacy for so visionary an object. We might answer all such arguments in true Yankee style by asking them the question, why it is that they are willing to endanger the same interests for the useless and supererogatory purpose of restricting its area? We stand merely on the defensive, and they invoke the action of the Government. Surely our position is more defensible than theirs!

There is, however, a more philosophic answer to these inquiries, and it is to be found in the peculiar nature of our condition, and the probable effect of any illegal interference by the Government on this subject. We stand almost alone amongst the highly-civilized portion of mankind in the maintenance of the institution of domestic slavery; the whole of civilized Europe has been thoroughly indoctrinated with opposition to it. The thousands and millions of emigrants from her shores all come with their prejudices against it, and when they arrive in this country they find the most lovely portion of the continent in possession of the slave-holders. Most of the mechanical trades and labor on farms and public roads in our country is performed by slaves, and these foreigners are more or less excluded from this wide field of employment, which they had partially pre-occupied in the North. Interest is thus superadded to the early prejudice of education against slavery. Unfortunately, too, the large mass of this class of persons have had no knowledge or experience of the advantages derivable from republican institutions or the solemnity of constitutional obligations. The native citizens of the North, although not participating in the destitution and inexperience of our immigrant population, have nevertheless been so long stimulated by false representations of the horrors of slavery and exaggerated statements of its rigors, that they too, are in a feverish and excited state, which frequently renders them unmindful of the respect due to our constitutional rights.

Under this disastrous state of feeling in the non-slaveholding States, with a consciousness that we are the weaker party, and becoming rapidly more so at each recurring census; with a further knowledge that there is no earthly means for a safe removal of slavery; that on its continuance and the forbearance of foreign interference depend not only our wealth, but the lives and fortunes of ourselves and families—can it be wondered at, under these circumstances, that we are alarmed by the smallest interference with slavery by the Federal Government?—that we are continually fearful that if one barrier is broken down, the hostile masses will overleap all others?—that we shudder with fear at the preponderating influence now acquired by the North, and anticipate with dread that fatal day, when the battle-cry will be for an amendment or alteration of the Constitution of the United States? It is idle to say that the people of the North would never dream of emancipating the slaves in the States against the consent of the owners. A party for such a purpose is already formed, with its numbers rapidly on the increase; and we have the memorable examples of the emancipation by France and England of their slaves in the West India colonies, to convince us that such a result here is perfectly natural and probable. Agitation against the slave trade commenced in England amongst a small class of society, and yet in forty years it resulted in the total and forcible abolition of slav-

very throughout the British empire. Who can calculate the expansive force of the same element in our own Government?

These, then, Mr. Chairman, are the reasons for our fears from any interference by the General Government with slavery, and the continuance of this unfortunate agitation on that subject; they also form the ground of my opposition to the delay and non-action policy of the President, and will forever prevent me from yielding it my support.

Withdrawing now our attention from this portion of the subject, I will proceed to examine the second proposition; and before doing so, Mr. Chairman, permit me to tender to its distinguished author, (Mr. McCLERNAND,) and his associates from his own and other States, in this and the other end of the Capitol, my unqualified admiration for the liberality and magnanimity which have characterized their course towards the South. If this Union is preserved and harmony restored by means of this bill, and others now in progress, the guardian Genius of our Republic may well exclaim of them, as the exulting mother of the Gracchi did of her children, "These are my jewels."

The first proposition contained in the plan to which I have referred, is the admission of California as a State into the Union. It must be confessed that this is a bitter pill to be swallowed by a Southern man, and if not gilded with other and more pleasant drugs, would be exceedingly difficult of digestion. I would never have opposed the immediate and unconditional admission of California on the ground of her exclusion of slavery, if I did not believe that great irregularity and illegality had attended her birth as a State, and that these defects of organization had caused a hasty, and perhaps injudicious action on this very question of slavery. It is not my purpose to make or insinuate any charge of bad faith in this matter, against the President of the United States, nor to inculpate the Administration with any action of the people of California on this subject. They have denied all charges in this matter, and in the absence of plenary proof, this denial prevents me from urging any contrary allegation; but it cannot be denied by the most ardent advocates for the admission of California, that there exist very grave objections to the course she has adopted in forming her constitution. California, as at present constituted, never existed before. She has undertaken to prescribe her boundaries without the assent of Congress; and in doing so, she has appropriated eight hundred miles of sea-coast on the Pacific, with all the golden regions of that new Territory; the extent of her shores and the number and splendor of her bays and harbors, are univalled by any five States of the Union. No legitimate power prescribed the extent or character of the privilege of suffrage enjoyed in their election. Whatever irregularities might have occurred on this head, there is no means of determining, or power of punishment for its infringement. Aliens, non-residents, and so-

journers of every description, may, and no doubt did, participate in her selection of members to the convention. Worse than all this, a military officer of the United States, even without any apparent authority from his own Government, or action of the people of California, undertook to call a convention and prescribe the time and terms of the election of its members. These are all certainly matters of serious weight against sanctioning the action of the California convention, and would, under different circumstances, perhaps insure its rejection ; but there is no *constitutional bar* to her admission, for if we should once accept her constitution as republican, the very act of our acceptance would waive all previous irregularities, and render her admission legal and proper. It is then but a question of expediency, to be judged of with all the attendant circumstances. All history teaches us the lesson, that the birth of States resembles the natural births—they are usually attended with difficulty and pain, but they can never be *repressed or prevented* ; no human power can regenerate an individual, or replace a State in the womb of time. California has sprung, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, full-grown and ready armed ; her destiny is onward, and we may turn her aside from our Confederacy, but we can never again make her our pupil.

Whatever may be the result of our action in regard to California, there is no prospect that she will ever change her attitude in regard to slavery. If we remand her back to a territorial condition, the possibility is, that she might renounce our allegiance and that we should have to imbrue our hands in the blood of our brethren before the stars and stripes would again float triumphant on the shores of the Pacific. But if this misfortune were avoided, there is not the remotest dream that slavery would ever be recognized within its limits. Amongst the countless myriads already within her borders and those on their road, but a comparatively small number have been accustomed to the menial services of slaves ; and even this small minority have been compelled, by the length and expense of the voyage, added to the danger of loss, to leave their slaves behind them, and trust to their own labor and resources. How is it possible, then, under any circumstances, to expect that the rejection of California can be beneficial to our future interest ? If the Southern States expect to remian in the Union and abide by the decision of Congress in regard to the questions of slavery, the real danger to them would seem to arise from the present rejection of California ; for a furious agitation against slaveholders would immediately re-commence in the North, and at the end of two years, instead of one California seeking for admission, we might have two or three non-slaveholding States carved out of her territory, and loudly demanding an immediate recognition as constituent members of our original Confederacy. I am therefore for the admission of California, if we can satisfac-

torily adjust the other questions connected with it, and thus let her enter our Union as the harbinger of peace and unity.

The second portion of this bill provides for the erection of territorial governments for Utah and New Mexico, without any restriction as to slavery. The only very important provision contained on the subject is the 39th section, which is as follows :

*And be it further enacted*, That the laws existing in that part of the territory of the United States known as "New Mexico" in the aforesaid treaty with the Mexican Republic, shall be the laws of the territory of New Mexico established by this act, and shall be valid and operative in said territory coextensive with the limits thereof, so far as the same are not incompatible with the provisions of this act and the Constitution and laws of the United States, and the rights of person and property secured and protected thereby ; subject, nevertheless, to be altered, modified or repealed by the governor and legislative assembly of said territory. And the laws of the United States are hereby extended over and declared to be in force in said territory so far as the same are applicable. All process, suits, and proceedings, civil and criminal, in law and chancery, and all indictments and informations which shall be pending and undetermined within the limits of said territory when this act shall take effect, shall be transferred to be heard and determined in the circuit court established by this act, including the district or county in which the same may be pending. All bonds, recognizances, and obligations, of every kind whatsoever, valid under existing laws within the limits of said territory, shall be valid under this act. And all crimes and misdemeanors against the laws in force within the limits of said territory may be prosecuted, tried, and punished, in the circuit court thereof, including the district or county in which the same may have been committed ; and penalties, forfeitures, and causes of action, may be recovered under this act, in like manner as under the laws which shall govern the same at the time when this act shall take effect.

It seems to me that this provision will meet the wishes of every section of our country. It does not undertake to decide whether the Mexican laws prohibited slavery or not. It alone continues those Mexican laws in force in regard to the rights of person or property, which are *existing at present*, and not inconsistent with the Constitution and laws of the United States. Now, if it be true, as stated by our Northern friends, that the laws of Mexico had abolished slavery in this territory, and that the extension of our Constitution and laws over the territory did not repeal those Mexican laws, then, sir, this territory will remain free soil after the passage of this bill, unless the territorial legislature or the convention to form a State government shall alter or repeal them. On the other hand, if the Mexican laws had not abolished slavery, or if the extension of our Constitution and laws over the territory is *ex vi termini*, a repeal of these Mexican laws, and they are inconsistent with the Constitution and laws of the United States, and the rights of person and property protected thereby, then, by this bill it is slave territory until the law is altered by the people. It seems to me that this is the true basis on which the question ought to rest ; for if it is now *free territory by law*, it ought to remain so, and no Southern man ought to desire Congress to establish slavery by law, where it does not already exist, for the power to establish would imply the power to abolish slavery, and this the South has always denied. But if it is slave territory

by law, it is equally unjust for any Northern man to invoke the aid of the General Government in suppressing an institution already established. This was the principle of the Clayton compromise bill, which was almost universally acceptable to Southern men, with the single difference, that when that compromise was offered, the Constitution and laws of the United States were only extended over the territory by implication ; whereas by this bill they are expressly enacted and enforced therein ; and furthermore, the territorial legislature may repeal or enact laws on the whole subject as the people there may deem best.

If the Southern people were right in their opinion, that the mere acquisition of territory by the United States, and implied extension of our Constitution and laws over it, was a virtual repeal of all Mexican laws prohibiting slavery, then these laws are no longer *in existence*, and as such are not recognized or adopted by the clause of the bill under consideration ; for it only recognizes such Mexican laws as *are existing* and now in force in the territory.

This section of the bill, then, in my opinion, expresses the true Southern doctrine, as advocated and understood by the masses—first, that there is to be a total non-intervention by the General Government in the restriction or establishment of slavery ; and secondly, that the people of the Territories, whether in their territorial legislature or in their State convention, can dispose of the whole subject as they deem best, if their legislation is in harmony with the Constitution of the United States.

In addition to the adjustment of the question of slavery on a fair basis, this bill creates governments for the citizens residing in that distant land, and will thus enable them to have justice administered in their Courts, and protect themselves by organized resistance against the small bands of hostile Indians who are ever hovering on the frontier, ready to murder the defenceless and plunder the unwary.

The last object achieved in this general measure of settlement, is the amicable location of the boundary of Texas. This has been a matter of serious embarrassment to our deliberations, both on account of the inherent difficulties attending its proper settlement, and the delicate situation we would occupy in giving any unpleasing decision towards Texas. It has always seemed apparent to me, that however ill-founded the abstract claim of Texas was to the boundary of the western branch of the Rio Grande, and her extension to the 42d degree of north latitude, yet her claim could never be disputed by the United States. When we negotiated with Texas for her annexation, she claimed this as her boundary, and had announced such a claim to the world, in the gravest and most authentic form. She had treated with General Santa Ana, and subsequently with Gen. Filisola, on this basis ; she had in her convention and legislative acts prescribed her boundaries and established what was *the State of Texas*.

In the celebrated annexation resolutions, there was a provision for the adjustment of her boundary with foreign nations, but none for any such international arrangement with the United States. After the annexation, the then President of the United States and his Cabinet repeatedly claimed the boundary of Texas to the Rio Grande, in our pending dispute with Mexico. Indeed, it is well known that the Mexican war originated from the occupation by our troops of the contested line between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, and at the conclusion of that war, the very map which formed the groundwork of our demarkation of boundary with Mexico, recognized and marked out Texas as extending to the limits of her present claim. It is impossible, then, for the United States successfully to deny her claim. The people of what was New Mexico, and is now embraced in the United States, or a portion of them, dispute the legitimate authority of Texas over them; *they* perhaps have rights which have been compromised by Congress, and which would be utterly denied by the bare and unconditional recognition of the claimed boundary of Texas. Under these embarrassing rights, it is fortunate if any arrangement can be made by which justice could be done to all the parties. It seems to me that this bill furnishes such a plan of conciliation. Texas yields all her territory north of 34 deg. north latitude to the United States, in consideration of \$10,000,000, to be paid her for the cession. By this means the people of New Mexico can be constituted into a separate government; the boundary of Texas will have been properly limited, and only a pecuniary consideration paid by the Union. Happily, indeed, for our country, if so dangerous and delicate a negotiation can be achieved at so small a pecuniary loss.

The only peculiar matter of interest to the Southern people in this settlement is, that the compromise line of slavery fixed by the annexation resolutions should not be disturbed. This has been fairly accomplished by a proviso for that purpose in the 44th section of the bill, and the only possible injury to us is, that the consent of Texas to the formation of new States above the 34th parallel of latitude, is no longer required. This may prove unfortunate, but no human wisdom can obviate all dangers, and we must always rest satisfied with the useful and the probable.

It would be exceedingly desirable during this session if some arrangement could be made for the carving out of a new State from the territory of Texas, and provision for its subsequent admission into the Union. My earnest hope is, that such an arrangement may be formed at some period, and the equilibrium of power thus preserved in one branch of our National Legislature. It would tend very greatly to the preservation of peace and harmony; but whether this can be done or not, the great principles of the bill under consideration ought to be adopted. It does comparative justice on the subject-matter to all portions of the coun-

try; it closes a source of irritation that has shaken the Union to its foundation, and is, in my opinion, a comprehensive and salutary measure. Entertaining these views, it will receive my earnest and ardent support, whatever may be the result to me, personally, of such a political course. This seems to me an appropriate occasion for sinking all idea of self-interest, in the single attempt for the salvation of our country. Our lives can last but a few years at best, and whether we pass them in the sunshine of public favor, or sunk in obscurity, is a matter of minor importance; but the preservation of our Union is a matter of vital importance to this and all succeeding generations.

The people, sir, whom I have the honor of representing in this Assembly, yield to none others in their devotion to the Constitution, and their estimate of the advantages derived from our Federal Union. We do not rest our attachment to the Union alone on the recollection of the battle-fields, where we have jointly struggled, or the laurels we have gained amid the crash and din of arms—there are other and more endearing memories treasured up in the past, to which we recur with peculiar satisfaction. When Tennessee was in the infancy of her existence as a State, when she was but sparsely settled, and her hardy pioneers were engaged in their early struggles with the Indian and in felling the native growth of our forests, the Yankee schoolmaster wended his way to our country, and gave us the benefit of his labors in educating and training our children. Much, very much of the distinction attained by our citizens, in all the avocations of life, is due to the unwearied efforts of this little band of Northern emigrants. The North, too, has furnished much of the capital which has built up our cities, improved our public roads, and developed all the resources of our State. We have, during the space of fifty years, mutually conferred and received so many benefits from each other, as to render the links of our friendship both grateful and permanent.

But, sir, I should do injustice to my State in grounding her devotion to the Union altogether on these pleasurable recollections of the past. It is in the prospect of the illimitable future that we find our best reason for the wish, that our institutions may be permanent—the hope for social, moral, and intellectual improvement amongst the masses of our population—the diffusion of knowledge and virtue throughout our land—the disenthralment of trade and commerce from the shackles in which they have been bound—the clearing out of our great rivers—the improvement of our public highways—the disemboweling the vast mineral treasures that lie buried in our mountains—the building up of a vast empire on the Pacific ocean—the hope that we will ever remain a beacon-light to the oppressed and down-trodden nations of the earth, and a resting place for their wearied limbs when driven from their homes—have constituted the gorgeous,

and we trust not unreal vision of the future, which has floated before our imagination, and bound us almost indissolubly to the Union. May this happy vision of the future never be dissipated, or its brightness obscured, is the earnest prayer of an humble, but devoted son of Tennessee and of the Union.

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### NASHVILLE CONVENTION.

There is one subject not at all connected with the main thread of my address, on which peculiar circumstances have rendered it necessary for me to make a few remarks. Several of the speakers in this debate have indulged in a spirit of prophecy in regard to the treatment to be given to the Southern delegates who propose an assemblage in Convention, at Nashville, in June next. Utterance has been given to the hope that the people of Nashville would treat them with such rudeness and ignominy as would prevent their remaining on their soil. Representing, as I do, the district in which Nashville is located, and having been born and raised within her limits, it would be wrong for me, by my silence, to give any countenance to the fulfilment of such hopes. It is due to the truth that I should say, that in my opinion a majority of the people of Nashville deem the convention unwise and inopportune ; but it is equally true, that they deeply sympathize in the feeling of hazard and alarm which has driven their Southern brethren to the adoption of this ulterior remedy ; and under no circumstances would they treat with rudeness and indecorum a reputable body of their fellow-citizens, who had assembled at our city for the discussion of such grave and solemn interests.

